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# The Chat

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# THE CHAT

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South Carolina

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## 2012 Annual Report of the South Carolina Bird Records Committee

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**Irvin Pitts<sup>1</sup>, Giff Beaton, Lex Glover, Chris Hill,  
J.B. Hines III, Will Post, Steve Wagner**

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In 2012, the South Carolina Bird Records Committee (SCBRC) took action on 17 records of which 14 were accepted, two rejected and one recommended for outside review. The decisions on two other reports initially reviewed in 2011 are also still pending outside review. Additionally, the committee received four other reports that were not circulated because of their non-review status. South Carolina's Main Species List continues to stand at 427 species. The most recent version is available online at <http://carolinabirdclub.org/brc>.

In 2012, the committee membership remained unchanged with the committee still consisting of seven people, with Irvin Pitts serving as Chair. The following report details actions taken by the SCBRC in 2012.

### **Accepted Reports:**

**Iceland Gull** (12-09-08, 02-11-11, 12-11-12 and 12-03-13). A compilation of reports, one dating back to 2003, along with photographs, were submitted by Chris Hill. All were accepted with the reporting member abstaining. These reports document an apparent continuing trend in recent years of this species' occurrence at the Horry County landfill near Conway. The Iceland Gull was added to the State's Definitive List in 1985 based on a record from 14 January 1985 (Post and Belser 1985). Acceptance of the 2012 reports brings to seven the number of records accepted by the SCBRC, which includes observations of birds from Huntington Beach State Park, Georgetown County in January 1998 and February 2000, and a bird on 25 February 2005 at the Savannah River Spoil Area in Jasper County.

**Northern Goshawk** (01-12-01). A report with accompanying photographs of a bird observed by Irvin Pitts and photographed by Nathan Dias during a Christmas Bird Count at the Savannah River Spoil Area on 2 January 2012 was accepted, with the reporting member abstaining. The SCBRC first added Northern Goshawk to the State's Provisional List on the basis of an accepted sight record from Caesars Head State Park in Greenville County on 9 October 1995. The species was added to the Definitive List after a dead immature bird was discovered and photographed on Kiawah Island, Charleston County in late December 2004 (Post and Shea 2007). The 2012 report constitutes the third accepted record of this species including the first known photographs of a free-flying bird in our state.



**Western Tanager** (01-12-02). This report, with photos of a bird discovered by Phil Turner at his home near Myrtle Beach, Horry County on 23 and 24 of January 2012, was unanimously accepted. The Western Tanager occurs as a very rare but regularly occurring winter visitor to South Carolina. Since 1987, there have been a number of reports of this species in winter including at least four with substantiating details. This species was first placed on the State's Definitive List in 1993 based on an accepted sighting of a bird (SCBRC: 1-92-2) in the Goose Creek area. The 2012 record represents the third report reviewed and accepted by the SCBRC.

**Snowy Owl** (02-12-03). A report of a Snowy Owl discovered in January 2012 at a farm located about 10 miles southeast of Camden, Kershaw County was submitted by Austin Jenkins and unanimously accepted. The bird was photographed alive on 17 January but unfortunately died shortly thereafter. Apparently, this record documents the first known report of this species in South Carolina in 25 years. Although a number of records of this owl exist historically, only two other reports have been deemed credible since 1956 (McNair and Post 1993). These include a specimen of an immature male collected near Whitmire, Newberry County in November, 1981 and another observed in Richland County from 18 November through 26 November 1987 (Glover and Cely 1987).

**Hudsonian Godwit** (02-12-04). A report of a bird found at Bear Island Wildlife Management Area in Colleton County by Jeff Click and members of the Greenville County Bird Club on 24 February 2012 was unanimously accepted. This bird was also seen and photographed by a number of different observers for the next several days. Post and Gauthreaux (1989) cites five records of this species dating back to 1941 and it was first added to the Definitive List in 1986, based on a bird that was present at Huntington Beach State Park from 31 October to 12 November 1985 (Post 1986). Since, there have been four additional documented reports, including two reviewed and accepted by the SCBRC: a bird at Huntington Beach State Park from 11 November through 7 December 1991 (SCBRC: 11-19-1) and another at the Savannah River Spoils Area in May 2003 (SCBRC: 05-03-07).

**Fork-tailed Flycatcher** (04-12-07). A report with excellent photos was received by Connie Kogler of a Fork-tailed Flycatcher discovered on 3 April 2012 at Edisto Island, Charleston County. The report was unanimously accepted. This represents only the second accepted record of this species in South Carolina, with the only other known record being a bird observed and photographed on 1 November 1973 at Bull's Island (Dick 1974).

**Arctic Tern** (06-12-12). A detailed report of an Arctic Tern, being the third in consecutive years, was submitted by Mike Bernard and pertained to a bird he saw over open ocean offshore Charleston Harbor on 2 June 2012. This report was unanimously accepted and constitutes the fifth record of this species. The Arctic Tern was first added to the State's Provisional List based on a report submitted by Steve Patterson of a bird sighted offshore Charleston (SCBRC: 5-92-3). The SCBRC elevated this species to the Definitive List through acceptance of a video obtained from Jack Peachey of

a bird offshore Murrell's Inlet in May 2004 (SCBRC: 05-04-05). Other accepted records include a specimen salvaged from Debidue Beach, Georgetown County in May 2009, which was well documented and photographed (Hill and Allen 2010), and two birds seen and photographed by Wendy and Dennis Allen on 16 May 2010 nine miles southeast of Winyah Bay (SCBRC: 05-10-03).

**Brown Booby** (06-12-13). An immature Brown Booby was first observed and reported by Brittany Hoffangle at Huntington Beach State Park, Georgetown County, on 8 June 2012 and documented by Ritch Lilly who photographed the bird on 9 June. This bird was seen and photographed by a number of other observers until 14 June when it was last seen by Lex Glover and others. A juvenile Brown Booby, which was deemed to probably be the same bird, was found and photographed by Betsy Brabson on the beach of North Island, Georgetown County on 25 June and reported by Wendy Allen to Chris Hill. These reports and photographs including those taken by Jeff Lemons on 10 June were unanimously accepted. This record constitutes only the second verified record of this species in the state.

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** (08-12-14). This species now occurs regularly in the state during the summer months, particularly in the lower Piedmont region. There have been at least two documented successful breeding records since 1982. Yet, this species occurrence is still considered noteworthy and the SCBRC continues to accept reports for review. A sighting report submitted by Peter Martin documented an immature bird he observed near the Catawba River in Rock Hill, York County on 19 August 2012. The report was unanimously accepted.

**Mourning Warbler** (09-12-15). Chris Snook submitted a detailed sighting report of a bird he captured and banded on 10 September 2012 at the Lighthouse Inlet Heritage Preserve on Folly Island, Charleston County. The report was unanimously accepted. This wood warbler occurs as a very rare migrant, with all known reports being in the fall. Post and Gauthreaux (1989) cites two acceptable records: a bird found near Kingstree, Williamsburg County on 30 October 1968 and one near Clemson on 4 October 1975, when it was first added to the State's Definitive List. Other existing reports include a record from James Island, Charleston County on 1 October 1990 (Charleston Museum 1991.37.08) and one banded by Lex Glover near Mayesville in Sumter County on 2 September 1991. The SCBRC also accepted three sighting reports from the upper Piedmont in September and October 1995.

**Black-chinned Hummingbird** (11-12-16). A report with photos submitted by Tammy Hester of a bird found in a yard at Lady's Island in Beaufort County on 10 November 2012 was unanimously accepted. This record constitutes the fourth reported occurrence of this species in South Carolina and the earliest reported fall arrival date. The SCBRC first added this species to the State's Definitive List in 1996 based on submitted photographs and videos of an immature male at a feeder in Lexington County during the winter of 1995 into March of 1996. Other accepted

records include an adult female (SCBRC: 01-99-2) found on James Island, Charleston County, from late January through early February, 1999 and a banded male (SCBRC: 02-03-01) visiting a feeder on Edisto Island, Charleston County, in January and February, 2003.

### **Non-accepted Reports:**

**Great Skua** (02-11-03). A report of two Great Skuas sighted from shore at Huntington Beach State Park, Georgetown County, was submitted for outside review as required by committee rules. Reviewer comments along with the original sighting report were circulated for a second vote and the report was not accepted. There have been no other previously accepted records of this species in South Carolina.

**Black Phoebe** (05-12-10). A report submitted of a bird sighted near the coast was not accepted due to the lack of substantiating details in the report. There have been no previously accepted records of this bird in South Carolina.

### **Unresolved Reports:**

The following three reports were submitted for outside review. The decision to circulate these reports to outside reviewers was made based on committee rules that dictate procedures resulting from close vote tallies. Further action by the committee will be taken on these records once outside comments are received and re-circulated to the committee members for a second vote.

**White-faced Ibis** (04-12-08). A report and photograph of a bird found near the coast is to be submitted for outside review as required by committee rules. If accepted, this report would constitute a first record of this species in South Carolina.

**Burrowing Owl** (07-10-08). This report and photograph of a bird found near the coast was initially submitted in 2011, but is still waiting outside review.

**Western Grebe** (02-11-05). A report of two birds found near the coast was initially submitted in 2011 and is still waiting outside review. Previously, the SCBRC has accepted one other record of this species in South Carolina.

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## 2012 Annual Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee

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**Michael Tove<sup>1</sup>, Chair, Keith Camburn, Ricky Davis, Eric Dean, Wayne Forsythe, Harry LeGrand, Jr., Jeff Pippen**

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The most significant development for both state Records Committees in 2012 was the adoption of a new set of operational Bylaws which included a new list category: "Introduced." The justification was that a number of species which occur with some regularity are excluded from any list simply because they are non-native or do not meet the standard benchmark of "stable or expanding breeding population for at least ten years." This list is intended to provide a means of recognizing the existence of feral species where the bird seen was not itself an escaped individual or from a sanctioned captive breeding reintroduction program. Birders are cautioned that individuals on this list are not "countable" on individual life lists under the traditional listing rules.

The North Carolina Bird Records Committee (NCBRC) voted on reports of 11 species, one subspecies, and re-evaluated one existing record in light of new information. The reference number (in parentheses) reflects the year reported and sequence in which the report was received.

### Accepted as Valid

**Greater White-fronted Goose** (*Anser albifrons*) (12-07, 12-08). This species is well known from the late fall through early spring and would not normally require NCBRC input. But, single individuals over-summered with feral Canada Geese in two locations. The first was at Lake Hickory, Burke County; photographed on July 25, 2012 by Jadon Carr. The second was at Lake Junaluska, Haywood County; photographed by Nathan Gatto on 23 June 2012 and Jeff Lemons on 29 June 2012. These occurrences raise the specter of a potentially new permanent resident goose species. The majority of members accepted both birds as wild although one member felt the Lake Hickory bird was a feral hybrid. Only time will tell if this occurrence was an anomaly or harbinger of a new pattern.

**Pacific Loon** (*Gavia pacifica*) (12-01). A winter-plumaged individual was photographed by Wayne Forsythe and seen by others on 5-6 January 2012 at Lake Julian, Buncombe County. Pacific Loon is a rare but regular winter visitor to the coast, but there are no previous records from the mountains of North Carolina. This record was unanimously accepted by the NCBRC. Pacific Loon is already on the Definitive List.



**Black-browed Albatross** (*Thalassarche melanophris*) (12-03). An adult seen and photographed a mile off Hatteras Inlet, Dare County by about two dozen observers on 18 February 2012 was unanimously accepted. There is a previous sight record of the species but no photographs or specimens. The photos elevate this species to the Definitive List.

**Harlan's race of Red-tailed Hawk** (*Buteo jamaicensis harlani*) (12-04). An adult light morph of this western subspecies of Red-tailed Hawk was seen by Mike Tove and Eddie Owens at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, Dare County on 2 March 2012. Though the NCBRC normally does not vote on subspecies, the possibility that this may in the future be split from the nominate Red-tailed Hawk makes this a significant sighting. Six members accepted the written report.

Although this is the first sight report of Harlan's Hawk, the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences has a specimen taken at Morrow Mountain State Park, Stanly County, in the winter of 1974-75, but the NCBRC did not accept photos of this specimen (LeGrand et al. 2010). Based on the Tove/Owens sighting, Harlan's Hawk is placed on the Provisional List as a recognized sub-species.

**Piping Plover** (*Charadrius melodus*) (12-09). A single individual was seen on 4 September 2012 at Hooper Lane, Mills River, Henderson County by Wayne Forsythe, Simon Thompson and Bob Olthoff and photographed by Forsythe. It was unanimously accepted. This is the first record from the mountain region.

**Monk Parakeet** (*Myiopsitta monachus*) (12-10). That this species occurs in North Carolina is undisputed. However, it was previously excluded from any list because the former rules provided no guidance for acceptance of introduced species. Because the only suitable voting category was "Unaccepted Origin," a non-accept vote, all votes for introduced species were excluded from any state accepted list (e.g., Monk Parakeet record 08-11 in 2008; LeGrand et al. 2009).

The committee reviewed three records including a 1974 breeding observation from Buncombe County (Simpson and Ruiz 1974), a nest-building bird photographed on 6 August 2008 by Ron Morris at Farmington, Davie County, and a pair of birds at Kill Devil Hills, Dare County photographed on 20 September 2012 by Audrey Whitlock. Five members voted to add the species to the newly established Introduced List. Monk Parakeet thus becomes the first species to be included under this new listing.

**Say's Phoebe** (*Sayornis saya*) (12-13). A single individual was found near Pettigrew State Park, Washington County on 27 December 2012 by Ed Corey. It was photographed by Scott Winton, seen by Nathan Gatto, Kyle Kittelberger, Jeff Lemons, Jeff Lyons, Robert Meehan on that day, and by scores of birders afterward. The report was unanimously accepted. There are four previous Coastal Plain and two Piedmont records of which only one was from winter (after mid-December). This species is already on the Definitive List.

**Tennessee Warbler** (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) (12-12). A single individual was photographed at Hillsborough, Orange County on 24 December 2012 by Carol Tuskey. This species is a regular migrant and normally warrants no consideration by the NCBRC. However, in light of the extreme late date, formal evaluation was appropriate. This report was unanimously accepted. This is the second winter record from the state. The first was a bird collected in Durham on 15 February 1967. Tennessee Warbler is already on the Definitive List.

**MacGillivray's Warbler** (*Geothlypis tolmiei*) (12-14). A single individual was seen 12 October 2012 in Manteo, Dare County by Audrey Whitlock and later heard by Jeff Lewis. Six members accepted the written report. This constitutes the third record from the state, all of which are from the Coastal Plain. MacGillivray's Warbler is currently on the Definitive List by virtue of a specimen and a photographed individual, both from Lake Mattamuskeet, Hyde County.

**White-winged Crossbill** (*Loxia leucoptera*) (12-11). A flock of up to six individuals was photographed at Manteo, Dare County on 23 November 2012 by Jeff Lewis and Bryan Murphy. The report was unanimously accepted. White-winged Crossbill is a rare and irregular late fall and winter visitor mostly in the western portions of the state. This constitutes the second record from the coast; the first involving more than a lone individual.

### Unaccepted Sighting

The following reports were judged to be unacceptable by a majority of NCBRC Members.

**Zino's Petrel** (*Pterodroma madeira*) (12-02). In 1995, Brian Patteson photographed a bird which he speculated on his website as a possible Zino's Petrel. Because Patteson's website is not a publication and he hedged the identification, it required no review by the NCBRC. This changed when Howell (2012, p. 189) published it, without the hedge, as the first North American record of Zino's Petrel.

This critically endangered species is unknown away from its breeding grounds at Madeira in the eastern Atlantic – more than 3000 miles from North Carolina. If accepted, such a record would constitute not only a first record from North Carolina and North America, but anywhere in the world away from the immediacy of its breeding grounds. As such, the burden of proof is, and should be, very high.

Committee members expressed varying opinions that ranged from passive acceptance to a strong belief the bird was misidentified; with four voting to reject. The majority of members, including at least one who did not vote to reject, expressed concerns that the current understanding of at sea identification is too poorly known to make this identification. However, two points were raised that specifically contradicts the identification:

Wing shape. Fea's (*P. feae*) and Zino's Petrel are known to differ by proportionate wing shape without overlap (Tove 2001). Photos of the NC

bird, converted to black-on-white silhouettes were examined side-by-side with black-on-white silhouettes of known Fea's and known Zino's in nearly identical flight poses. The wing shape of the NC bird matched Fea's and not Zino's.

White under-wing bar. The identification as Zino's was principally influenced by recent observations that a minority of Zino's Petrels seen off Madeira have a white under-wing bar while Fea's from those waters apparently do not. However, there are two problems with this assumption:

The total number of live sightings of Zino's Petrels is very small. Thus a minority of that number means this plumage feature may occur in very few individuals and is anomalous.

The presence of a white under-wing stripe has not been demonstrated to be characteristic of Zino's Petrel, it is not unique to that species. The NCBRC viewed a photograph by Tommy Ekmark (Bird Quest – Google Images) taken in the Cape Verde Islands of a Fea's Petrel with a white mid-wing stripe.

**Yellow-legged Gull** (*Larus michahellis*) (12-06). A single report of this species (Lewis 1996) was previously accepted on the Definitive List. However, in light of more recent revelations about gull hybrids, particularly Herring X Lesser Black-backed (*L. argentatus* x *L. fuscus*) it was re-circulated for re-evaluation. This time, only three members accepted the published description and none accepted the photos. Accordingly, this species is removed from the North Carolina List.

**Mountain Bluebird** (*Siala currucoides*) (12-05). A bird seen and photographed from Fayetteville, Cumberland County, was judged by six members to be more likely an aberrant Eastern Bluebird (*S. sialis*). Although the plumage initially seemed good for a female Mountain, scrutiny of the bird's posture, head and bill proportions revealed a bird more consistent with Eastern Bluebird. That the bird seemed paired – at least for a time, with a male Eastern, did not help the case for Mountain Bluebird.

## Summary

This round of reports elevates one species (Black-browed Albatross) to the Definitive List, adds one species (Monk Parakeet) to the newly recognized Introduced List, adds one sub-species (Harlan's Hawk) to the Provisional List and deletes one species (Yellow-legged Gull) from all lists. Thus, the Definitive List remains at 461 species, but with the acceptance of one species onto the new Introduced List, the Accepted List is increased to 474 species (i.e., 461 Definitive, 1 Introduced, and 12 Provisional – not including subspecies).

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*Received 21 February 2013*



## General Field Notes

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*General Field Notes briefly report such items as rare sightings, unusual behaviors, significant nesting records, or summaries of such items.*

*First, second, or third sightings of species in either state must be submitted to the appropriate Bird Records Committee prior to publication in The Chat.*

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### First Documented Records for Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) in North Carolina

**Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.**

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Although most states had records of Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, North Carolina did not have its first convincing sight record of this western thrush until December 2005 in Orange County (Travis 2007). Unfortunately, the observer was unable to get photos of the bird, and other observers failed to see the bird in an attempt to obtain permanent photographic documentation.

A few years later in early 2010, there was a remarkable flurry of records of Varied Thrush from the eastern Piedmont and the mountains: three sightings, each photographed, all in a span of six weeks. Details of these records follow.

#### **Harnett County Record**

On 2 January 2010, Angie and William DeLozier observed an unfamiliar bird, somewhat like an American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) but unfamiliar to them, in their yard near Chalybeate Springs in northern Harnett County. They first saw it on a tree branch about 5 m high. The bird then flew to the ground to scratch and flew back to another branch only 2 m off the ground. They watched the bird for about 10 minutes before it flew off. Fortunately, William DeLozier was able to obtain several photographs (Figure 1).

The bird was about the size of an American Robin, with a bright orange chest and belly and a strong black band across the chest. It showed an orange eyebrow. It was also spotted along the flanks, and the back had a bluish tinge. After checking a field guide, the couple identified the bird as a Varied Thrush.

Several birders tried to relocate the bird a day or two later but were unsuccessful. However, a dying Varied Thrush was found on 30 January near Angier, roughly 8 km to the east of Chalybeate Springs (*vide* Becky

Desjardins). The thrush was turned over to the NC Museum of Natural Sciences, where it was made into a cataloged specimen: NCSM 23439, Ad. Male, 31 January 2010, locality as follows: NC: Harnett Co.; Angier, within 0.75 mile of 150 West Rd. In all likelihood, this specimen was the bird seen by the DeLoziers.



Figure 1. Varied Thrush photographed 2 Jan 2010 at Chalybeate Springs, Harnett County, North Carolina. Photo by Angie and Bill DeLozier.

### **Henderson County Record**

Charles and Lorene Gudger saw an unfamiliar bird in their yard in Fletcher, Henderson County, on 1 February 2010. It was feeding on cracked corn under a feeder in the yard, which had snow on the ground. As with the Harnett County record, they observed the bird for about 10 minutes and obtained several photos (Figure 2). They sent the photos via the internet to a friend in Nevada, who identified the bird as a Varied Thrush. One to several birders made an unsuccessful attempt to relocate this bird.

The bird they observed was the size of an American Robin, with an orange-yellow throat and wing marking. As with the first report of the winter, photos seem to indicate an adult male Varied Thrush. The Henderson County record is a first for the mountains of North Carolina.



Figure 2. Varied Thrush photographed 1 Feb 2010 in Fletcher, Henderson County, North Carolina. Photo by Lorene Gudger.

### **Alamance County Record**

A third Varied Thrush was reported barely two weeks after the Henderson County sighting. Steve Wedge, an experienced birder, immediately identified the thrush in his yard in Mebane, in eastern Alamance County, on 13 February 2010. Unlike with the other two records, this bird was clearly not an adult male and likely was an immature bird, perhaps a female. Also unlike the other two sightings, a few dozen birders were able to converge on this new residential neighborhood within an hour or two, although it took several hours of searching for all present to see the bird. It flew from tree to tree in the neighborhood, mainly perching 3-10 m up in bare hardwoods; however, it was not seen to forage in these trees. In fact, it was never seen feeding.

This thrush was perhaps slightly smaller than an American Robin and slightly chunkier. The long creamy to salmon-colored stripe over the eye extended back toward the nape, immediately setting the bird apart from a robin. The under parts showed a salmon-colored throat, a narrow dark gray breast band, and pale salmon-colored breast and belly. The lower under parts were a bit scaled or scalloped with darker markings, but these markings were scarcely visible at a distance. The upper parts and most of the wings, including the side of the head, were a soft gray-brown. There were many



conspicuous salmon-colored patches on the wing. The two wing bars appeared somewhat spotted rather than appearing in broad bands. There was also a notable salmon-colored patch distal to the second band, and the closed primaries and secondaries contained much of this salmon color as well. The tail was rather short to moderate but was not as long as that of an American Robin. The bill was that of a typical thrush although its color was not obvious.

Documentation of this bird was made by photos taken by Derb Carter (Figure 3) and Bert Fisher. Other observers of the thrush included the author, Ricky Davis, Wayne Irvin, Jeff Pippen, Will Cook, Keith Camburn, and Taylor Piephoff, among 8 to 10 others. The thrush was seen again on the following day but not after 14 February.

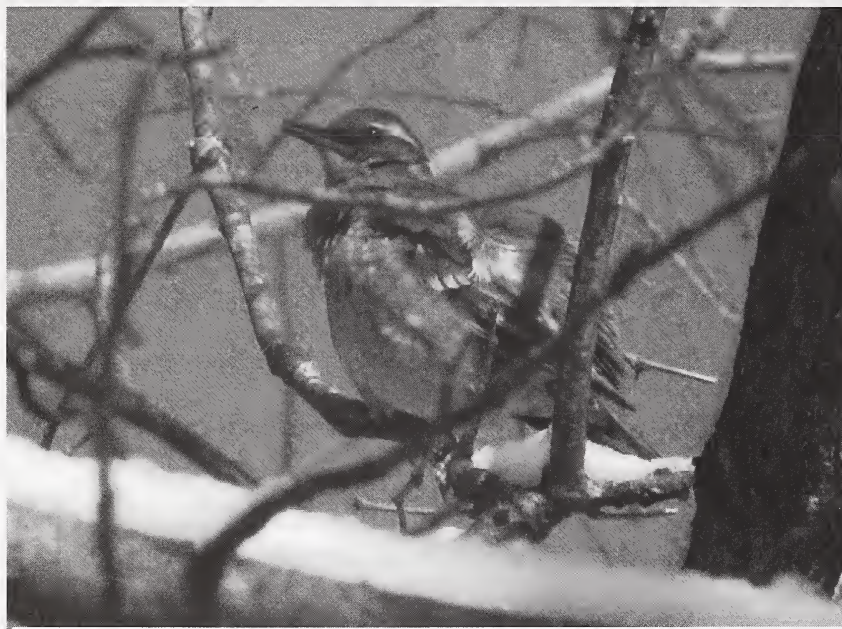


Figure 3. Varied Thrush photographed 13 Feb 2010 at Mebane, Alamance County, North Carolina. Photo by Derb Carter.

## Discussion

The Varied Thrush breeds from Alaska south to California along the West Coast and inland to Alberta and Montana. Most individuals migrate southward to winter in the western states, but a few individuals are seen each winter in the eastern states, more frequently in the Northeast than in the Southeast. Most notably, Virginia had 11 records prior to North Carolina's first in 2005 (Rottenborn and Brinkley 2007). South Carolina and Georgia each had several records prior to 2005 as well.



There was a noteworthy invasion of Varied Thrush into the Mid-Atlantic States during the winter of 2009-2010, as summarized by Brinkley (2010). He noted that eight individuals were reported between Pennsylvania and North Carolina, considerably more than the usual number. As nearly all were at feeders or in backyards, he speculates that severe cold may have pushed birds farther south than usual, and that heavy snow may have brought them in to feeders. Of the five records away from North Carolina, one was from South Carolina (on 15 February) (Blankenship and Southern 2010) and another was from Virginia (from 5 February to the end of the month) (Adams and Hafner 2010).

All three reports from 2010 were accepted by the North Carolina Bird Records Committee (LeGrand et al. 2011). The specimen immediately elevated the species from the Provisional List to the Official List. Acceptance of each photo would also have elevated the species to the Official List.

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## BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Fall 2012, unless otherwise noted)

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*Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.*

Winter	December 1–February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1–May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1–July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1–November 30	due December 20

*Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.*

*Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.*

*Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.*

*I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.*

*If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.*

*Reports published herein may include sightings that require review by the state's bird records committee. Such reports are not considered accepted records until, and unless, they are so ruled by the committee.*

**Snow Goose:** One at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Dare County (Co), NC, 17 Oct (Audrey Whitlock) was somewhat early. A blue-morph juvenile on the campus of Charleston Southern University, Charleston Co, SC, 19 Nov into winter (Matthew Campbell) was interesting. The goose was thought to be of the Greater (*atlantica*) subspecies, in which blue-morph birds are "virtually unknown." Inland sightings included two at the Water



Greater White-fronted Goose, 20 Nov. 2012, Charleston Southern University, SC.  
Photo by Matthew Campbell.

Treatment Plant (WTP) along NC-191 in Henderson Co, NC, 12 Nov (Wayne Forsythe); one at the Kerr Scott Reservoir, Wilkes Co, NC, 19 Nov (Isaac Kerns); and one at Mason Farm Biological Reserve, Orange Co, NC, 26 Nov into December (Nate Swick).

**Ross's Goose:** Sightings included one in a field in Barco, Currituck Co, NC, 15 Nov (Audrey Whitlock); two at the same location 16 Nov (Linda Ward); two photographed at the N end of Coddle Creek Reservoir, Cabarrus Co, NC, 17 Nov (Phil Fowler, Jeff Lemons); one photographed at Veteran's Park, New Hanover Co, NC, 17 Nov (Sam Cooper); and one at a WTP in Williamsburg Co, SC, 28 Nov (Jay Chandler).

**Mute Swan:** One seen at Lake Conestee Nature Park in Greenville Co, SC, 18 Nov into winter (Paul Serridge, Jane Kramer, multiple observers [m. obs.]) was thought to be of wild origin.

**Tundra Swan:** Six on the E end of the lake at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 12 Oct (Scott Winton) were somewhat early. One seen in flight over Jordan Lake, NC, 16 Nov (Andrew Thornton) was locally unusual.

**Eurasian Wigeon:** A drake found on the pond at the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, during the Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival (W.O.W.), 5 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, Audrey Whitlock, m. obs.) continued into December.

**Northern Shoveler:** Somewhat early were eight on Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 22 Aug (Paul Bernhardt); six on Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 3 Sep (Elisa Enders, Nick Flanders); and a juvenile at Dobbins Cattle Farm in Townville, Anderson Co, SC, 10 Sep (Paul Serridge).

**Green-winged Teal:** One in the company of Blue-winged Teal on Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 19-24 Aug (Thierry Besançon, Nick Flanders) was a good find for that date.

**Common Eider:** Individual females were found at the jetty at Huntington Beach State Park (SP), Georgetown Co, SC, 21 Nov (Stephen Thomas) and at Shalotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 24 Nov (Taylor Piephoff).

**Surf Scoter:** Inland, an immature female was seen on Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 21-24 Oct (John McVay, m. obs.) and a female was seen on Lake Norman, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 3 Nov (Jeff Lemons, Jan & Phil Fowler, Chris Talkington).

**White-winged Scoter:** First-winter birds were found at two inland sites—at Lake James SP, Burke Co, NC, 30 Oct (Jamie Cameron, Dwayne Martin) and along Wildlife Drive at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, photographed 27 Nov (Shelley Rutkin).

**Black Scoter:** A female on Lake Hickory, SE Caldwell Co, NC, 30 Oct (Dwayne Martin) was a good find for that inland site.

**Long-tailed Duck:** Five on Falls Lake, Wake Co, NC, 22 Nov (Thierry Besançon, Harry LeGrand) was a great count, as most sightings made on inland lakes are of individuals. One was photographed on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 3 Nov (Jeff Lemons, Jan & Phil Fowler, Chris Talkington). One seen on the relatively small and urban Carolina Lake in Carolina Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 10 Nov (Dorothy Pugh) into winter (m. obs.) may have been injured.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** One at the S end of Oregon Inlet, NC, 1-20 Aug (Audrey Whitlock, m. obs.) was unusual for August. Two on Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 11 Nov (Nick Flanders, Mark Kosiewski) were good finds for that inland lake.

**Red-throated Loon:** Inland sightings involved two in flight, heading south, high over Prairie Ridge Ecostation, Wake Co, NC, 3 Nov (Brian O'Shea); one photographed on Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 18 Nov (Jeff Lemons, m. obs.); and one on the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 20 Nov (Brian Bockhahn).

**Wood Stork:** Post-breeding wanderers were noted at several inland sites this fall. In SC, one was seen in Simpsonville, Greenville Co, SC, 4 Aug (George Farmer) and two were seen at a farm pond off US-378 in Saluda Co, SC, 28 Aug (Marion Clark). In NC, one or two were seen at the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, 24 Aug (Ed Corey, Nick Flanders) through 17 Sep (Paul Bernhardt) and six were seen on Popes Lake, Harnett Co, 22 Sep (Lynn Erla Beegle, Cathy Sue Harvey). Four remained at Twin Lakes in



Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, until at least 24 Nov (Taylor Piephoff, Rob Van Epps).

**Magnificent Frigatebird:** An amazing sighting away from the coast, an adult female was seen over Southpoint Mall in S Durham Co, NC, 2 Sep (Joshua Sims) and relocated at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, where photographed, an hour later (Ali Iyoob). In a more typical area, an immature female was seen over the Baum Bridge, between Manteo and Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 18 Sep (Dean Carpenter, Wilson Laney).



Magnificent Frigatebird, 2 September 2012, Jordan Lake, NC. Photo by Ali Iyoob.

**Great Cormorant:** One was seen at the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 28 Nov (Brian Bockhahn).

**Anhinga:** Ten over Sandling Beach, Falls Lake, NC, 20 Sep (Brian Bockhahn) was a good count for that inland site. One photographed in flight over Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 21 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was a county first. One was seen in flight over Riverbend Park, Catawba Co, NC, 4 Nov (Dwayne Martin).

**American White Pelican:** One seen at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, in early September (Sam Cooper, Audrey Whitlock) was likely the same bird that summered in that area. High counts included 62 at Donnelly Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Colleton Co, SC, 29 Sep (Pam Ford, Perry Nugent); 130 at Pea Island NWR, 17 Oct (Whitlock); 42 over Hampstead, Pender Co, NC, 20 Oct (Tony Blagdon); 75 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 26 Oct (David McLean); 40 at the Davis Impoundment in Carteret

Co, NC, 4 Nov (Clyde Adkins); and up to 90 in Mt Pleasant, Charleston Co, SC, 20 Nov (Chris Snook). Inland, individuals were seen Riverbend Park, Catawba Co, NC, 14 Oct (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby, Monroe Pannell) and at the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 29 Oct (Andrew Thornton) and 17 Nov (Doug Shadwick, Peter Perlman). One found on the beach, atypical habitat for this species, in Brunswick Co, NC, 29 Oct (Scott Walker) may have been deposited there by Hurricane Sandy.

**Brown Pelican:** Rare so far inland, an immature Brown Pelican was seen on Lake Norman, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 6-12 Sep (Ron Pfeffer, David Wright, m. obs.).

**Least Bittern:** One photographed at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 19 Aug (Scott Winton) was locally unusual. One photographed at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 7 Oct (Cathy Miller) was somewhat late. A moribund individual found along a road in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 20 Nov (Gilbert Grant) was a curious find for that location and date.



Least Bittern, 7 Oct. 2012, Bear Island WMA, SC. Photo by Cathy Miller.

**Great Egret:** Somewhat late for the Piedmont region were individuals at Riverbend Park, Catawba Co, NC, 4 Nov (Dwayne Martin); in Rockingham Co, NC, 16 Nov (Martin Wall); at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 18 Nov (Thierry Besançon); at Fisherman's Cove, Rowan Co, NC, 22 Nov (Andrew Thornton); and at McAlpine Creek Park, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 25 Nov (Laurie Foss, Sheila Hargis).

**Snowy Egret:** One at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 14 Aug (Nick Flanders) and two at the same location, 1 Sep (Steve Shultz) were unusual.

**Tricolored Heron:** Individuals at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 31 Aug through 2 Sep (Paul Bernhardt, Thierry Besançon) and at Popes Lake, Harnett Co, NC, an immature bird, 6 Sep (Robert Oberfelder) were good finds for those inland sites.

**Reddish Egret:** Sightings included one at Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 1 Aug (Jeff Lemons, Chris Talkington); one on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 1 Aug (Cherrie Sneed, Ed & Aija Konrad); two near the spit at Ft Fisher, border of Brunswick and New Hanover Co, NC, 3-5 Aug (Harry Sell, Greg Massey, et al.); three on Deveau Bank, Charleston Co, SC, 4 Aug (David Gardner); one at Ocean Isle Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 8 Sep (Sarah Clark, Nathan Gatto); three near the spit at Ft Fisher, 20 Sep (Massey); one at South Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, 20 Sep (Paul Serridge); five on Deveau Bank, 23 Sep (Gardner, et al.); and two at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 25 Sep (Serridge).

**White Ibis:** An immature along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 22-23 Aug (Tony Evans, Ron Selvey) and three on Lake Reidsville, Rockingham Co, NC, 5 Aug (Martin Wall) were two of the more inland sightings.

**Glossy Ibis:** One was present along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 19-21 Sep (Wayne Forsythe), interestingly near the same spot where a Glossy Ibis was seen in May.

**Roseate Spoonbill:** In NC, one was seen at Ocean Isle Beach, Brunswick Co, 1 Aug (Walt Kent) and two remained at Twin Lakes, Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, 5 Aug (John Ennis) from July. SC counts included eight at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 4 Aug (Cherrie Sneed, et al.); five at Caw Caw Interpretive Center, Charleston Co, SC, 22-23 Aug (Keith McCullough); three at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 30 Aug (*fide* Gary Phillips); two on Seabrook Island, Charleston Co, SC, 6 Sep (Liz King); and 70 at Bear Island WMA, 26 Oct (David McLean, Cal & Ilene Kunin).

**Swallow-tailed Kite:** One seen soaring over NC-113, near New River SP, Alleghany Co, NC, 11 Aug (Eric Harrold) was a first for that county. Quite remarkable were the concentrations of post-breeding wanderers in two western counties in late August—up to eight over fields in McDowell Co, NC, 17 Aug (Tony Geiger) through 24 Aug (Jamie Cameron) and up to 12 over fields in Anderson Co, SC, 20 Aug (Vince Jackson, Matt Johnson, et al.).

**Mississippi Kite:** Also remarkable were several concentrations of Mississippi Kites in the western part of our region in mid-to-late August—six over Cataloochee Ranch in Haywood Co, NC, 15 Aug (Dan Kaplan); 15 over fields in Anderson Co, SC, 20 Aug (Matt Johnson, et al.); and 25 over fields between Marion and Old Fort, McDowell Co, NC, 23 Aug (Dwayne Martin).

**Northern Goshawk:** Briefly seen in flight were immature goshawks at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, a large female, 25 Nov (Jeff Lewis) and



over US-64, just E of Columbia, Tyrrell Co, NC, 25 Nov (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand).

**Broad-winged Hawk:** Somewhat late were individuals over Bodie Island, Dare Co, NC, 2 Nov (Peggy Eubank, Audrey Whitlock) through 8 Nov (Brian Bockhahn) and in the Butner Gamelands in Durham Co, NC, 5 Nov (Nate Swick).

**Swainson's Hawk:** An immature light-phase individual, seen in flight W of Chapel Hill, Orange Co, NC, 18 Nov (Derb Carter) was a first for that county.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** A light-morph individual was seen over the marshes along NC-12 at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, NC, 25 Nov (Clyde Adkins).

**Golden Eagle:** Individuals were seen over Fish Haul Creek Park, Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 5 Nov (Kathy Greider) and at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 25 Nov (Lee Adams, Jeff Lewis).

**Yellow Rail:** One was flushed at North River Marsh, along US-70 in Carteret Co, NC, 27 Nov (John Fussell).

**Black Rail:** Individuals were heard calling in a marsh along NC-345 in Wanchese, Dare Co, NC, 20 Aug (Jeff Lemons) and at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 23 Sep (David Gardner, et al.).

**Sora:** Two of the better counts were up to 30 at Mackay Island NWR, Currituck Co, NC, 30 Sep (Jeff Lemons) and 25 at Magnolia Plantation and Gardens in Charleston Co, SC, 28 Oct (Ann Truesdale).

**Purple Gallinule:** A first-year individual photographed at Savannah NWR, SC, 8 Nov (Buddy Campbell) was a good find for the month of November.

**Common Gallinule:** 14 at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 16 Oct (Audrey Whitlock) and 80 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 26 Oct (David McLean) were good counts. One on Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 28 Oct into winter (Jeffrey Turner, m. obs.) was locally unusual.

**Sandhill Crane:** Sightings were made of one in flight over the Lake Landing area of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 16 Aug (Scott Winton); one in flight over the Brickhouse Road area of the Butner Gamelands, Durham Co, NC, 4 Nov (Elisa Enders, Nick Flanders); two at a golf course in Surfside Beach, SC, 8 Nov (Richard Squires); and three in a field in Newport, Carteret Co, NC, photographed 19 Nov (Aron Lembke).

**Black-bellied Plover:** Inland, individuals were found at the American Turf farm in Washington Co, NC, 12 Aug (Nick Flanders); at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 22 Aug through 3 Sep (Steve Patterson); and at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 20 Oct (Thierry Besançon, Flanders) through 28 Oct (Mike Turner).

**American Golden-Plover:** Sightings included one at the American Turf farm in Washington Co, NC, 17 Aug (Jeff Lemons) through 6 Sep (Sam Cooper); two at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co,



NC, 29 Aug (Simon Harvey); one in the horse pasture adjacent to the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 9-23 Sep (John Fussell, m. obs.); two near the spit at Ft Fisher, border of Brunswick and New Hanover Co, NC, 20 Sep (Greg Massey); one in flight over downtown Rocky Mount, NC, 9 Oct (Ricky Davis); one at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 14 Oct (Audrey Whitlock); and three at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, on the late date of 18 Nov (Jay Ross, Jeff Lewis).

**Semipalmated Plover:** Inland sightings included 30+ along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 1 Aug (Wayne Forsythe); four at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 29 Aug (Steve Patterson, Lex Glover, Josh Arrants); and three on the mudflats at Big Beaver Dam Creek in Anderson Co, SC, 10 Sep (Paul Serridge, et al.). On the coast, a count of 5000+ around the spit at Ft Fisher, border of Brunswick and New Hanover Co, NC, 3 Aug (Harry Sell, Greg Massey) was quite impressive.

**Piping Plover:** A first-year bird seen and photographed along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 4-5 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Bob Olthoff, Simon Thompson, Bob Evans) was a first for that county.

**American Avocet:** Inland sightings included two at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 2 Sep (Thierry Besançon) and 12 on Lake Norman in Lincoln Co, NC, 20 Oct (Jeff Lemons).



Piping Plover, 4 September 2012, Henderson County, NC. Photo by Wayne Forsythe.

**Willet:** A western-race Willet seen and photographed at Archie Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 6-7 Aug (Phil Dickinson, m. obs.) was the county's first record of that species.



Willet, 7 Aug. 2012, Winston-Salem, NC. Photo by Hop Hopkins.

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** One at Archie Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 20-21 Nov (Jeff Turner, Phil Dickinson) was rather late for a site in the Piedmont region.

**Upland Sandpiper:** This species was present at the American Turf farm in Washington Co, NC, throughout much of August, with peak counts of six on 12 Aug (Nick Flanders) and 22 Aug (Linda Ward). One seen perched atop a fence bordering a horse pasture in S Moore Co, NC, 15 Aug (Wayne Irvin) was a first for that county. In SC, individuals were seen in a field along SC-57 in Horry Co, 13 Aug (John Ennis) and at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, 29 Aug (Steve Patterson, Lex Glover, Josh Arrants).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** Inland sightings included two along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 4 Aug (Bob Dellinger, Cynthia Worthington) and one at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 29 Aug through 3 Sep (Steve Patterson).

**Red Knot:** 150 at the Rachel Carson Reserve in Beaufort, Carteret Co, NC, 21 Nov (John Fussell) was a good count for that time of year. Fussell theorizes that very high tides and brisk northerly winds concentrated these shorebirds at that site.



**Sanderling:** One at Super Sod along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 11 Aug (Jeff Click, et al.) through 19 Aug (Wayne Forsythe) was a good find for the mountains.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** A count of 3500+ around the spit at Ft Fisher, border of Brunswick and New Hanover Co, NC, 3 Aug (Harry Sell, Greg Massey) was remarkable. One found in a flooded field at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 7 Nov (Ricky Davis) was quite late.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Sightings included one on the mudflats of Lake Hartwell, Anderson Co, SC, 18 Aug (Simon Harvey, Brian Barchus); three in the puddle next to the Old Coast Guard Station at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 5 Sep (Sam Cooper); 12 at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 9 Sep (John Fussell, Jack Fennell); six around the spit at Ft Fisher, border of Brunswick and New Hanover Co, NC, 20 Sep (Greg Massey); and one at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, on the late date of 25 Nov (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** Individuals were found on the mudflats of Lake Hartwell, Anderson Co, SC, 18 Aug (Simon Harvey, Brian Barchus); in the puddle next to the Old Coast Guard Station at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 5 Sep (Sam Cooper); and at the Ft Fisher spit, border of Brunswick and New Hanover Co, NC, 20 Sep (Greg Massey). Two were present at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 23 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) through 4 Sep (Simon Thompson).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** A few of the better counts at sod farms were 50+ at American Turf in Washington Co, NC, 17 Aug (Jeff Lemons); 75 at Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, 18 Aug (Ann Truesdale); and 100+ at Modern Turf in Sumter Co, SC, 29 Aug (Steve Patterson, Lex Glover, Josh Arrants). Somewhat late was one at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 4 Nov (Elisa Enders, Nick Flanders); one at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 11 Nov (Jeff Lemons, Audrey Whitlock); and two at Silver Bluff Audubon Center, Aiken Co, SC, 17 Nov (Lois Stacey, et al.).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** Inland sightings included one at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 18 Aug (Mike Turner); two at Modern Turf, Sumter Co, SC, 29 Aug (Steve Patterson, et al.); and one at Archie Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 12 Oct (Phil Dickinson, et al.). This species was present at the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, through much of August and September, with a high count of seven, 12 Aug (John Fussell, Jack Fennell).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** High counts at sod farms were 14 at Super Sod along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 29 Aug (Simon Harvey); four at Modern Turf, Sumter Co, SC, 7 Sep (Steve Patterson); and 23 at American Turf, Washington Co, NC, 9 Sep (Steve Shultz). Individuals were also seen at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 4 Aug (Paul Serridge, et al.) and next to the ferry terminal at Cedar Island, NC, 16 Sep (John Fussell, Jack Fennell).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** 5500+ around the spit at Fort Fisher, border of Brunswick and New Hanover Co, NC, 3 Aug (Greg Massey, Harry Sell)

must have been quite a sight! One at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 29 Aug (Robert Meehan) through 3 Sep (Nick Flanders) was a good find for that inland site.

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** Three seen and heard calling at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 18 Aug (Ann Truesdale) were a good find for that inland site. A dowitcher, thought to be a Long-billed though not heard vocalizing, seen on Randleman Lake, Randolph Co, NC, 25 Nov (Andrew Thornton) was quite late for either species at an inland site.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** Individuals were found in a brackish pool along the beach near the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 19 Aug (John Fussell, Jack Fennell); at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 29 Aug (Steve Patterson, Lex Glover, Josh Arrants); in the puddle next to the Old Coast Guard Station at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 5 Sep (Sam Cooper); and at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 14-15 Sep (Nick Flanders, m. obs.).

**Sabine's Gull:** Two first-year Sabine's Gulls were seen and photographed over Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 23 Sep (Nathan Gatto, Jeff Lemons, David Wright, et al.). This sighting provided the fourth record of Sabine's Gull on Lake Norman, which, remarkably, were all made during the month of September.

**Black-headed Gull:** One was seen over the Pamlico Sound, NC, from the Ocracoke to Swan Quarter ferry, 10 Nov (John Wright, et al.).

**Laughing Gull:** Individuals at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 18 Aug and 28 Oct (Ricky Davis) were locally unusual.

**Iceland Gull:** An immature seen at the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 17 Nov (Peter Perlman, Doug Shadwick) through 22 Nov (m. obs.) was a first for that county.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Inland, individuals were seen at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, a first-winter bird, 1 Oct (Ricky Davis) and at the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 17 Nov (Nate Swick) into December (m.obs.). 12 at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, NC, 9 Sep (John Fussell, Jack Fennell) was a good count for a site other than a barrier island. 76 along one mile of beach in Southern Shores, NC, 30 Oct (Jeff Lewis) provided a high count.

**Sooty Tern:** A juvenile, flying N, was seen from the spit at Ft Fisher, border of Brunswick and New Hanover Co, NC, 20 Sep (Greg Massey).

**Gull-billed Tern:** The peak count of the annual late-summer congregation at Davis Impoundment, Carteret Co, NC, was 160 on 19 Aug (John Fussell). Fussell wonders "considering how scarce this species has become . . . from what sized area do this many birds come from?"

**Common Tern:** Inland sightings included one on Graham-Mebane Lake in Alamance Co, NC, 2 Aug (Steve Wedge); 15 on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 23 Sep (Jeff Lemons, et al.); 12 at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 1 Oct (Ricky Davis); two on Randleman Lake, Randolph Co, NC, 4 Oct (Andrew Thornton); 42 on Jordan Lake, Chatham



Co, NC, 3 Oct (Scott Winton); two on Lake Norman, somewhat late, 3 Nov (Lemons, et al.); and one on Jordan Lake, late, 21 Nov (Lemons, Nathan Gatto, Sarah Clark).

**Forster's Tern:** 43 at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 1 Oct (Ricky Davis) was a good count for that inland site.

**South Polar Skua:** One was had on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 13 Oct (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Parasitic Jaeger:** Individuals were seen over the ocean from the shore at Fort Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 13 Nov and 20 Nov (John Fussell).

**White-winged Dove:** One was seen in Folly Beach, Charleston Co, SC, 1 Nov (Francie Cashman).

**Monk Parakeet:** Two were seen in Kill Devil Hills, Dare Co, NC, 19 Sep (Jeff Lewis) through 28 Sep (Jeff Lemons) where they had reportedly been present since early September. As is the case with all parakeets seen in the Carolinas, the origin of these birds is questionable.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** Somewhat late were individuals at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 3 Nov (Lynn Erla Beegle, Jeri Smart, et al.); in the Thornburg Tract of Uwharrie National Forest (NF), Randolph Co, NC, 4 Nov (Andrew Thornton); and in Forsyth Co, NC, 10 Nov (Carol Cunningham).

**Barn Owl:** Individuals were seen in Townville, Anderson Co, SC, 28 Sep (Michele Nichols, Daniel Hueholt, et al.); hunting over a ditch in rural Beaufort Co, NC, 30 Oct (Alan Meijer); and at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 25 Nov (John Fussell, Jack Fennell).

**Short-eared Owl:** One at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 9 Nov (Ricky Davis) was unusual because it was seen during mid-day, circling very high, and interacting with a Red-tailed Hawk!

**Common Nighthawk:** Individuals seen over Manteo, Dare Co, NC, during W.O.W., 6 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, et al.) and the Odell Weeks Activities Center in Aiken Co, SC, 11 Nov (Peter Stangel) were late.

**Chimney Swift:** One seen over Bodie Island, Dare Co, NC, during W.O.W., 6 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, et al.) was late.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** Visiting feeders into winter was a female in Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, from 15 Nov (Lena Gallitano) and an immature male in Pinehurst, Moore Co, NC, from late October (*fide* Susan Campbell). Both were unusual because most wintering Ruby-throateds are found along the coast.

**Selasphorus Hummingbird:** Visiting feeders were individuals in Pittsboro, Chatham Co, NC, a female, 2 Sep (Phil Warren); in Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, a female, 2 Oct (Kathy Tinius); in Edenton, Chowan Co, NC, a female, mid-October into winter (Gin Gilliam); in Bettie, Carteret Co, NC, a female or immature male, mid-November into early winter (Carolyn Mason, John Fussell); and in Asheville, Buncombe Co, NC, a female, 20 Nov (David Clarke). Though these hummingbirds were most likely

“Rufouses,” female and immature birds are difficult to identify to species without close examination.

**Rufous Hummingbird:** An adult male seen feeding in a patch of jewelweed at Carver’s Gap, Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 6-15 Sep (Rick Knight) was interesting because most Carolina Rufous sightings are made at feeders. An adult male was photographed at a feeder in Person Co, 27 Oct into November (David Cox, Martin Wall). An immature female banded in Pinehurst, Moore Co, NC, 26 Nov (Susan Campbell) had been present for over a month.



Rufous Hummingbird, 10 Sept. 2012, Roan Mountain, NC. Photo by Don Mullaney.

**Merlin:** Sightings from the western half of our region included one at Riverfront Park, Richland Co, SC, 2 Sep (John & Rhonda Grego); two at a hawk watch on Pilot Mountain, Surry Co, NC, 15 Sep (Scott DePue, Phil Dickinson, et al.); one in Spartanburg Co, SC, 28 Sep (Simon Harvey, et al.); one at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 25 Oct (Brad Dalton) and 26 Oct (Jane Kramer); and one along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 6 Nov (Wayne Forsythe). 57 over a nine-day period on Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, NC, 3-11 Oct (Peter Vankevich) provided an impressive count.

**Peregrine Falcon:** Individuals at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 29 Aug (Steve Patterson, Lex Glover, Josh Arrants) and at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 8 Sep (Jeff Lewis) were somewhat early. One returned to downtown Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, NC, for a seventh winter, 10 Oct (Anne Clark).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Individuals were found at Mason Farm Biological Reserve in Chapel Hill, Orange Co, NC, seen and heard calling, 31 Aug (Andrew Thornton, Ali Iyooob); at Reynolda Gardens, Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, photographed, 17 Sep (Carol Cunningham, Jeff Turner, et al.); and in Black Mountain, Buncombe Co, NC, 1 Oct (Stu Gibeau).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** One seen and heard calling at Pettigrew SP, Washington Co, NC, 6 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, Audrey Whitlock) was quite late.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Single birds were found at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, seen and heard calling, 10 Sep (Greg Massey); at Jackson Park, Henderson Co, seen and heard calling, 13 Sep (Dwayne Martin, et al.); at Eno River SP in Orange Co, NC, heard, 20 Sep (Nate Swick); and at Ribbonwalk Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, NC, seen 25 Sep (Ron Clark) and 3 Oct (Tom Sanders).

**Say's Phoebe:** One was briefly seen at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 24 Nov (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand, Jeff Lemons, Jeff Lewis).

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** Four sightings were made in the NC coastal plain in November—in a roadside swampland in Pender Co, photographed 4 Nov (David Hoffman); along Brier Hall Rd at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 7 Nov (Brian Bockhahn); near the



Ash-throated Flycatcher, 4 Nov.  
2012, Pender County, NC.  
Photo by David Hoffman.



intersection of Link Rd and Long Curve Rd at Alligator River NWR, 28 Nov (Peggy Eubank); and in a private community in New Bern, Craven Co, 27-29 Nov (Matt Gould).

**Western Kingbird:** Individuals were seen at Carvers Creek SP, Cumberland Co, NC, 20 Oct (Ed Corey); at Lighthouse Inlet Heritage Preserve, Folly Island, Charleston Co, SC, 23 Oct (Kristina Wheeler, Keith McCullough); and in the Audubon Swamp at Magnolia Plantation and Gardens, Charleston Co, SC, 4 Nov (Ann Truesdale, Pam Ford, et al.).

**Gray Kingbird:** One photographed at the marina at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 22 Aug (Lee Adams, Audrey Whitlock) was a one-day wonder.

**Bell's Vireo:** One was mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 6 Sep (Aaron Given, et al.). Interestingly, a different Bell's Vireo was mist-netted at the same site 17 Sep 2011.

**Warbling Vireo:** Individual migrants were found on Bodie Island, Dare Co, NC, 17 Aug (Irvin Pitts, Don Faulkner); at Yates Mill Pond, Wake Co, NC, 3 Sep (James Kalat); in 17 Acre Wood, Durham Co, NC, 12 Sep (Robert Meehan); at the Hospital Fields of Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 12 Sep (Jerry Griggs, et al.); and on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, on the very late date of 23 Nov (Jeff Lewis).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** Two were seen along the boardwalk at Duck Park in Duck, Dare Co, NC, 10-11 Sep (Jeff Lewis, Audrey Whitlock). Singles were had at the Old Coast Guard Station at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 19-21 Sep (Lewis, Whitlock); at Bunched Arrowhead Heritage Preserve, Greenville Co, SC, 22 Sep (Irvin Pitts); along the Cottonwood Trail, Spartanburg Co, SC, 23 Sep (Dorothy Graves) and 28 Sep (Simon Harvey, et al.); at Carolina Beach SP, New Hanover Co, NC, 28 Sep (Greg Massey); at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 29 Sep (Nick Flanders, Mark Kosiewski); and on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, mist-netted, banded, and released, 5 Oct (Aaron Given, et al.).

**Common Raven:** Five were seen near the rock quarry in Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 9 Sep (Dwayne Martin). Sightings from the greater Triangle area of NC, where increasing, included two in the Butner Gamelands, Durham Co, 14 Oct (Elisa Enders, Nick Flanders); two at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, 28 Oct (Mike Turner); three over I-40 near the Harrison Rd exit, Wake Co, 9 Nov (Mike Tove); and two at Falls Dam, Wake Co, 21 Nov (Ali Iyoob, Matt Gould, Scott Winton).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** Somewhat late was one at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 1 Oct (Daniel Hueholt) and three at Archie Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 18 Oct (Phil Dickinson).

**Cave Swallow:** One found amongst a flock of Tree Swallows over a field in Washington Co, NC, 19 Oct (Ali Iyoob) was a little early. Several impressive counts were made in early November—three in a private community in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 6 Nov (Matt Gould); 12 over the catfish ponds along US-64 in Creswell, NC, 7 Nov (Ricky Davis); 33 in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, 8 Nov (Gilbert Grant); five at the Folly



Beach fishing pier, Charleston Co, SC, 8 Nov (Dennis Forsythe, Keith McCullough); and six at the Cape Hatteras Campground, Dare Co, NC, during W.O.W., 9 Nov (Taylor Piephoff, et al.).

**Barn Swallow:** Late were pairs at Archie Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 12 Oct (Phil Dickinson) and in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, 31 Oct (Gilbert Grant).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Irruption-year nuthatches began arriving early in the fall, with one at The Nature Conservancy's Nine Times Preserve, Pickens Co, SC, 25 Aug (Jeff Click, et al.) being the earliest. By mid-fall, this species was being seen across our region, with counts of 50+ made at Carvers Creek SP, Cumberland Co, NC, 20 Oct (Ed Corey) and along the entrance road to the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 2 Nov (Audrey Whitlock).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** One at Lake Betz, Wake, Co, NC, 28 Oct (Eddie Owens) was late. Five, possibly over-wintering in the area, in a private community in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 26 Nov (Matt Gould) provided a good late-fall count.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** Somewhat early were individuals along the Rocky Branch Greenway, Wake Co, NC, 20 Sep (Nick Flanders) and on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 20 Sep (Aaron Given, et al.).

**Swainson's Thrush:** Quite late were sightings (of possibly the same bird) at nearby sites in Charleston Co, SC—on Seabrook Island, 21 Nov (David Gardner) and on Kiawah Island, mist-netted, banded, and released, 29 Nov (Aaron Given, et al.).

**American Pipit:** Quite early was the flock of 24 pipits found in a raised bed strawberry field NW of Spartanburg, SC, during its Fall Bird Count, 8 Sep (*vide* Lyle Campbell).



Lapland Longspur, 4 November. 2012, Concord, NC. Photo by Phil Fowler.

**Lapland Longspur:** At least two, and reported up to five, were seen in fields near the Charlotte Motor Speedway, Cabarrus Co, NC, 4-17 Nov (Jeff Lemons, et al.).

**Snow Bunting:** One was found in the campground at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 9 Nov (Jonathan Cooley, Jeff Lemons, Audrey Whitlock).

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** One mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 1 Sep (Aaron Given, et al.) was somewhat late for that species; while one seen along Funston Rd in Brunswick Co, NC, 29 Sep (Greg Massey) was very late.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** Sightings included one at Bethabara Park, Forsyth Co, NC, 23 Aug (Carol Cunningham, Bill Gifford, Royce Hough); one in the Hospital Fields of Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 12 Sep (Jerry Griggs); one at Hanging Rock SP, Stokes Co, NC, 14 Sep (Andrew Thornton); two at Jackson Park, Henderson Co, NC, 20 Sep (Wayne Forsythe); and one at Paris Mountain SP, Greenville Co, SC, 22 Sep (Irvin Pitts).

**Prothonotary Warbler:** One at Jackson Park, Henderson Co, NC, 1 Sep (Keith Camburn, Wayne Forsythe, Paul Serridge, et al.) through 11 Sep (Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was a good find for the mountain region.

**Swainson's Warbler:** Individuals were reported from Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, mist-netted, banded, and released, 3 Sep (Aaron Given, et al.); in a wet area of Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 20 Sep (Wayne Forsythe); and at Caw Caw Interpretive Center, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Sep (Keith McCullough). Three at Catfish Lake, Croatan NF, Craven Co, NC, 5 Sep (John Fussell) was a good count considering the difficulty of finding the species after breeding season, when not singing.

**Tennessee Warbler:** Two of the better counts were 67 along the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) near Mt Mitchell SP, NC, 7 Sep (Marilyn Westphal) and 50+ at Jackson Park, Henderson Co, NC, 21 Sep (Wayne Forsythe).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** Inland, sightings were made of individuals at Sandling Beach, Falls Lake, Wake Co, NC, 20 Sep (Brian Bockhahn); at Price Park, Guilford Co, NC, in mid-October (Henry Link); along the Rocky Branch Greenway, Wake Co, NC, 19 Oct and 9 Nov (Nick Flanders); at Sandy Creek Park, Durham Co, NC, 23 Oct (Andrew Thornton); and at Lake Betz, Wake Co, NC, photographed, 28 Oct (Eddie Owens).

**Nashville Warbler:** Sightings from the eastern portion of our region, where less common, were made of individuals on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 10 Sep (Aaron Given, et al.); on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 10 Sep (Jeff Lewis, Audrey Whitlock, Peggy Eubank); at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 19 Sep (Whitlock) and 29 Sep (Lewis); at Bass Lake, Wake Co, NC, 16-22 Oct (Josh Southern); and at the Duke University "SWAMP", Durham Co, NC, 18-19 Oct (Scott Winton).

**Connecticut Warbler:** A first-fall female near Elk Knob, Watauga Co, NC, 30 Sep (Curtis Smalling, Richard Gray) was the only Connecticut reported this fall.

**MacGillivray's Warbler:** A MacGillivray's Warbler was heard and then seen in the Elizabethan Gardens in Manteo, NC, 11-12 Oct (Jeff Lewis, Audrey Whitlock). This is the third accepted record of this species in the Carolinas. One additional report has been sent for outside review by the NC Bird Records Committee.

**Mourning Warbler:** An immature bird was seen in a yard in N Asheville, Buncombe Co, NC, 7 Sep (Simon Thompson).

**American Redstart:** One at Cypress Gardens, Berkeley Co, SC, 27 Nov (Kathy Woolsey) was very late, possibly attempting to over-winter at that site.



American Redstart, 7 October 2012, Folly Beach, SC. Photo by Jerry Esch.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** Uncommon-to-rare along the coast, individuals were good finds on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 5 Oct (Aaron Given, et al.) and along the boardwalk in Duck, Dare Co, NC, 10 Oct (Peggy Eubank).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** One mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Aug (Aaron Given, et al.) was early for that species along the SC coast.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** A juvenile found along a greenway in Morganton, Burke Co, NC, 10 Aug (Richard Ferguson) was quite early.

**Prairie Warbler:** Late and possibly attempting to over-winter were individuals at Bodie Island, Dare Co, NC, 9 Nov (Audrey Whitlock) and 25 Nov (Jeff Lemons); at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 25 Nov (John



Fussell, Jack Fennell); and in a private community in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 26 Nov (Matt Gould).

**Wilson's Warbler:** Sightings included one along a greenway in Morganton, Burke Co, NC, 27 Aug (Richard Ferguson); one on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 2 Sep (Aaron Given, et al.); one at Carver's Gap, Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 6 Sep (Rick Knight); two at Jackson Park, Henderson Co, NC, 11 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); a female in the Elizabethan Gardens, Dare Co, NC, 11-12 Sep (Jeff Lewis); and one in Guilford Co, NC, in late September (Henry Link).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Late individuals were noted at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 20 Oct (Thierry Besançon, Nick Flanders); on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 2 Nov (Aaron Given, et al.); at Nags Head Woods Preserve, Dare Co, NC, 8 Nov (Audrey Whitlock); and at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 25 Nov (Carroll Richard).

**Bachman's Sparrow:** One found in a recently-burned area along Little Road in the Croatan NF in Craven Co, NC, 12 Sep (John Fussell) was the observer's first in this northern part of the Croatan in 20 years.

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** An unprecedented number of sightings were made in our region this fall. Were there more of these birds here, or were birders trying harder to find them? Sightings included one at Mt Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, NC, 7 Sep (Todd Arcos, Jamie Harrelson, Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal); an immature bird banded at the E end of Fort Jackson, Richland Co, SC, 10 Sep (Lex Glover, et al.); individuals banded on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 28 Sep and 6, 18, 20, & 21 Oct (Aaron Given, et al); four at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 Sep (Sam Cooper) through 12 Oct (Greg Massey, Harry Sell) with one remaining through 21 Nov (Mike McCloy); one near the Old Coast Guard Station at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 29 Sep through 10 Oct (Jeff Lewis, Audrey Whitlock); one in the Ellerbe Creek area of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 2 Oct (Andrew Thornton) and 31 Oct (Scott Winton, Ed Corey); one at Patriot's Point, Charleston Co, SC, 6 Oct (Brad Dalton); three at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 14 Oct (John Fussell, Jack Fennell); one or two at Bodie Island, Dare Co, NC, 3-9 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, Jeff Lemons, Lewis, Whitlock); one at Pettigrew SP, Washington Co, NC, 5 Nov (Bockhahn); and two in a private community in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 29 Nov (Matt Gould).

**Vesper Sparrow:** The fall's sightings included one on the N dike of North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 19-20 Oct (Albert Kuhnigk, Audrey Whitlock); two in the sparrow fields on the W side of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, 19 Oct (Ali Iyoob); one at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 25 Oct (Kevin Metcalf); one in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, 3 Nov (Wayne Forsythe); one mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, NC, 3 Nov (Aaron Given, et al.); one at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 10 Nov (Sam Cooper); and one at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 10 Nov (Jeff Lewis).





Lark Sparrow, 16 September 2012, Folly Beach, SC. Photo by Cathy Miller.

**Lark Sparrow:** Well-reported this fall, individuals were seen at Archie Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 14-15 Aug (Nathan Gatto, Phil Dickinson); on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 17 Aug (Jeff Lewis); near the Old Coast Guard Station at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 31 Aug (Tony DeSantis) and 12 Oct (Nick Bonomo, Carolyn Sedgwick); at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 3 Sep (Thierry Besançon, Elisa Enders, Nick Flanders); at Lighthouse Inlet Heritage Preserve, Charleston Co, SC, 14-17 Sep (Keith McCullough, et al.); at the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Sep (Jeannie Kraus, Chandra Biggerstaff); and at the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 2-3 Nov (Peggy Eubank, et al.).

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** Somewhat late were individual migrants at Duke University, Durham Co, NC, 1 Nov (Scott Winton); at McDowell Prairie, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 3 Nov (Ron Clark); and at Mason Farm Biological Reserve, Orange Co, NC, 5 Nov (Andrew Thornton).

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** An early migrant in the Hospital Fields of Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 11 Oct (Jerry Griggs, Norma Siebenheller) was a good find for the mountain region. One was photographed at the Pine Island Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 20 Oct (Ed Konrad). Two were seen in a private community in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 27 Nov (Matt Gould).

**Nelson's Sparrow:** Away from the coast, individual migrants were good finds along the Rocky Branch Greenway in Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, 10 Sep (Nick Flanders); in the Hospital Fields of Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 11 Oct (Jerry Griggs, Norma Siebenheller); and in a wet, weedy ditch along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 11 Oct (Wayne Forsythe).

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** Six in the Ferguson Fields at Kituwah Farm, Swain Co, NC, 7 Oct (Mike McCloy) was a remarkable count. Individuals were seen at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 10 Oct (Nate Swick); along Cottonwood Trail, Spartanburg Co, SC, 14 Oct (Jeff Click, et al.); in Guilford Co, NC, 14 Oct (Henry Link) and 16 Oct (Martin Wall); on the W side of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, 19 Oct (Ali Iyooob); in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, 21 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); and at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 25 Oct (Kevin Metcalf). Two were seen along the maintenance road off Bodie Island Lighthouse Rd, Dare Co, NC, 8 Nov (Ricky Davis) and again 25 Nov (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** An immature at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 Sep (Sam Cooper) was a little early. Two at Lighthouse Inlet Heritage Preserve, Charleston Co, SC, 2 Nov (Keith McCullough) were good finds. 11 visiting a feeder in Lenoir, Caldwell Co, NC, 27 Nov (Walt Kent) provided a high count.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** Late were individuals visiting feeders in Waynesville, Haywood Co, NC, 26 Nov through early December (Bernice Ciatto) and in Kitty Hawk, Dare Co, NC, 30 Nov (Jeff Lewis).

**Painted Bunting:** A female/first-year plumaged individual at Alligator River NWR, 10 Nov (Jeff Lewis) was locally unusual. An adult male lingered at a feeder in St Matthews, Calhoun Co, SC, 29 Nov into early December (*fide* John Grego).

**Dickcissel:** Individual migrants were found at Lake James SP, Burke Co, NC, 9 Sep (Jamie Cameron); in Duck, Dare Co, NC, 11 Sep (Jeff Lewis); at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 21 Sep (Lewis); at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, an immature bird, 28 Sep (Greg Massey) and 3 Oct (Bruce Smithson); at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 21 Oct (John Fussell, Jack Fennell, Clyde Adkins); at a feeder in Camden, Kershaw Co, SC, a female, 6 Nov (Steve Patterson), and at a feeder in Mt. Airy, Surry Co, NC, a female, 12-14 Nov (Robin Diaz).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** A female was found inside a large flock of Brown-headed Cowbirds in a cattle pasture at the Vernon James Research Station in Washington Co, NC, 23 Nov (Jeff Lemons) and 24 Nov (Keith Camburn).

**Rusty Blackbird:** Two of the better counts of this declining species were 100 at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 10 Nov (Brad Dalton) and 45+ along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, SC, 18 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Simon Harvey).



**Brewer's Blackbird:** One at Dobbins Cattle Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 16 Nov (Todd Arcos) was the only one mentioned this fall.



Orchard Oriole, 29 November 2012, New Bern, NC. Photo by Matt Gould.

**Orchard Oriole:** A first-winter female was photographed in a private community in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 29 Nov (Matt Gould). Sightings of this species during the late-fall/winter are very rare in our region.

**Baltimore Oriole:** 100 at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 10 Sep (Jeff Lewis, Peggy Eubank, Audrey Whitlock) was an impressive concentration of migrants.

**Purple Finch:** 22 at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 28 Nov (Brad Dalton) was a good count of this irruptive finch.

**Red Crossbill:** In the NC mountains, where found year-round, counts included six in a Hemlock tree at Bass Lake, Watauga Co, 9 Sep (Guy McGrane); five at Bengé Gap along the BRP, border of Ashe and Wilkes Co, 4 Oct (McGrane); and two at Grandfather Mountain, Avery Co, 16 Nov (Jesse Pope). Irruption-year crossbills began arriving at sites outside of the mountains in mid-November, with flyover singles on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 9 Nov (Jeff Lewis); in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 9 Nov (Sam Cooper); over Lake Hickory, border of Alexander and Catawba Co, NC, 11 Nov (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby); and in Corolla, Dare Co, NC, 22 Nov (Lewis). Four were seen at Riverbend Park, Catawba Co, NC, 18 Nov (Martin).





Red Crossbill, 22 Sept. 2012, Roan Mountain, TN/NC. Photo by Don Mullaney.

**White-winged Crossbill:** This, rarer of the two crossbill species, was found at two sites in Dare Co, NC, in late November—in the Elizabethan Gardens on Roanoke Island, two, a male and a female, 21 Nov (Jeff Lewis), seven birds 23 Nov (Lewis), and two remaining 24 Nov (m. obs.); and in Corolla, NC, six in flight, 22 Nov (Lewis).



White-winged Crossbill, 23 Nov. 2012, Roanoke Island, NC. Photo by Brian Murphy.

**Common Redpoll:** Another irruptive finch, a few Redpolls moved into North Carolina in late November, with sightings of a female at Mason Farm Biological Reserve, Orange Co, 18 Nov (Jeff Sieren); one on the Sandy Ridge Trail at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 18 Nov (Jeff Beane); two in flight over the Elizabethan Gardens, Dare Co, 21 Nov (Jeff Lewis); one in flight over Corolla, Dare Co, 22 Nov (Lewis); and one on the UNC campus, Orange Co, 27 Nov (Ali Iyoob).

**Pine Siskin:** Two near the Old Coast Guard Station at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 5 Oct (Jeff Lewis) were a little early. By the end of the period, large counts were being made at sites across North Carolina, indicating an irruption year for the species.

**Evening Grosbeak:** Absent for several years, Evening Grosbeaks started showing up again at sites across North Carolina in mid-November. Females visited feeders in Lenoir, Caldwell Co, 15 Nov (*fide* Dwayne Martin) and in Waynesville, Haywood Co, 17 Nov (Bernice Ciatto). One was seen atop a tall Tulip Poplar tree at Gold Park, along the Eno River in Hillsborough, Orange Co, 16 Nov (Brian Bockhahn). Seen and/or heard in flight was one over St Stephens Park in NE Hickory, 16 Nov (Martin); three near Creedmoor, Granville Co, 17 Nov (Clyde Sorenson); "a small flock" over the Elizabethan Gardens in Manteo, Dare Co, 20 Nov (Jeff Lewis); one over Weymouth Woods, Moore Co, 20 Nov (Mike McCloy); one over a yard in Durham Co, NC, 23 Nov (Will Cook); and three over Falls Dam, Wake Co, NC, 23 Nov (Ali Iyoob).

## Fifty Years Ago in *The Chat*—March 1963

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The March 1963 issue of *The Chat* was edited by David W. Johnston of the Department of Biology at Wake Forest College. The cover featured a photograph taken by Jack Dermid of a Brown-headed Nuthatch emerging from a nest cavity. Jack Dermid is a renowned wildlife photographer probably best known for his work with *Wildlife in North Carolina* magazine. He was a regular contributor to *The Chat* and served as a Contributing Editor for a time as well.

In this issue, Dr. Johnston summarized the results of the 1962 Christmas Bird Count conducted in the Carolinas. A total of 24 counts were conducted with two Northern Shrikes, "one adult, one brownish-immature", reported on the Crumpler count, near Todd, NC.

Will Post, Jr. published a detailed report of tower casualties he discovered in Aiken South Carolina on the night of September 6-7, 1962. More than 400 birds of 32 species were killed after colliding with a television tower. The five most abundant species found killed were Red-eyed Vireo (239), Ovenbird (30), Veery (22), Bobolink (20), and Black-and-white Warbler (19). Individual specimens of Sora, Common Nighthawk, Golden-winged Warbler and many other species were also found. Post noted "All were in fat condition, especially the Red-eyed Vireos and Icterids."

James F. Parnell described his new research study, begun at North Carolina State College in 1962, to document "the particular habitat relations of warblers while in migration". One goal was to collect and analyze data from local Raleigh migratory populations and correlate it with regional observations of migration. He requested that bird watchers throughout both states spend time documenting warbler migration in their area in detail and submit their records to him for analysis.

Mrs. R.C. Tedards provided the results of a detailed study of Barn Owl food items that she undertook with Dr. Johnston. She collected 93 Barn Owl pellets over several months from a group of owls nesting in the trunk of a white oak tree near Anderson, South Carolina. The owls were believed to have been nesting in the vicinity of that tree for over 30 years. She turned the pellets over to Dr. Johnston for analysis. The preferred prey item was Cotton Rat followed by Least Shrew, House Mouse, and Meadow Vole.



# CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

[www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org)

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes. Make checks payable to Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Send checks or correspondence regarding membership or change of address to the Headquarters Secretary, or use <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/about.html>. Dues include \$6 for a subscription to the *CBC Newsletter* and \$7 for a subscription to *The Chat*.

## ANNUAL DUES

Individual or non-profit.....	\$25.00
Family or business .....	\$30.00
Patron.....	\$50.00
Student.....	\$15.00
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive \$125 installments) .....	\$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member).....	\$100.00

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